CHAPTER III

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL DATA OF THE SELECTED COMMENTATORS

One of the most difficult things is to present the biographical data of the Sanskrit writers. While most of them have not given any autobiographical details in their books, there is also lack of any recorded history in this regard. The third obstacle in this regard is non-availability of the referred Sanskrit works. Most of them have banished with the span of time. This biographical data of the commentators is based on two types of evidences. I. The Internal, II. The External. The internal evidence or references of autobiographical details are available in few of them. Majority of the commentators evade to give any such details following the tradition of their predecessors. The references in the works of others is only alternative source of getting the required information which also however does not suffice the need.

The pioneer work of Aufrecht, 'Catalogus Catalogrium' presents a wealth of information about writers, and their works. To a great extent this great work offers rich informative potentialities which can be developed with more additions, into biographical details. Dr. S.K. Dey has also made an effort in this regard but his main basis is none else but Aufrecht himself. Short biographical data is presented below of the commentators included in this study. Vāmanācārya has also given a list of 46 commentators in the beginning of his commentary.
This commentator is one of the two oldest commentators on Kāvyaprakāśa. His commentary called Saṁketa, is dated in Samvat 1216=1159=80 A.D. 1 Manikyacandra was a Jain author of Gujrat who belonged to the Kotikagana Vajrasākhā Rajagaccha. The concluding verses of his commentary trace his spiritual genealogy to Śilabhadra after whom came in succession Bharatesvara, Vairavīn, Nemicandra and Sāgarendu. Our author states that he was a pupil of Nemicandra as well as of his successor Sāgarendu, who wrote out in the Samvat 1252=1196 A.D. at Pattana the first copy of Amarsvāmicarita. Our Manikyacandra 4 seems to be identical with Manikyacandra, author of Pārśvanātha-carita which is said to have been completed on the Diwālī of Samvat 1276=1220 A.D. in Devakupa (Divbandar) by the sea site. In it the author gives a spiritual genealogy, traced up to Pradyumana Sūri and corresponding exactly to that given in the Saṁketa. Manikyacandra also appears to have written a Nalayōna or Kubera Purāṇa. Manikyacandra mentioned in Merutunga’s Prabodha Cintāmani as having flourished under Jaya Singh of Gujrat seems to be a different person.

1Vāmācārya’s commentary’s Introduction, p. 22.
2Extracts in Peterson IV, pp. 157-60.
4Extracts in Peterson III, pp. 157-63.
5Peterson iii, p. 357.
SRIDHARA

With the title of Samdhi Vigrahaka cited by Candesasa and Visvanatha on Mammata, Sridhara's commentary is called Viveka. A Manuscript of the Viveka was copied in Mithila in 1405 A.D. Sridhara's date would be about first quarter of the 13th century A.D. Dr. S.P. Bhattacarya on the basis of reference made to Vacaspati Misra by Sridhara has fixed the upper limit of Sridhara in 1200 A.D. to which year Vacaspati Misra has been assigned. While the lower limit of Sridhara has been fixed at 1500 A.D. This has been done on the basis of citation of Sridhara by Ratnesvara a Mithilas scholar. He is different from minister of King Nanyadeva of Mithila and his son Gangadeva who lived near about 1150 A.D. but not much after. From the account we have of him as the author of an inscription, it is far from likely that he was our commentator. In the Kav. Pr. Viveka, Sridhara, in spite of his being a "Sandhivigrahika", is reticent to a degree about his patron, while the minister author of the inscription, offers superlative praise to his master as well as to a work of his. The writers on Alamkara Sstra agree unanimously though giving no specific reasons that Sridhara belongs to Mithila. H.P. Sastri in his Report (1895-1900), Manmohan Cakravarti in I.A.S.B. (1915) and quite recently Upendra Thakur (in H.M. pp. 262, 288) are all agreed on this.

1Dr. S.P. Bhattacarya's Introduction to Kav. Pr. Viveka, p. 55.
CANDIDASA

Candidasa at the very outset of his work declares that his commentary named Dipika was written at the instance of his friend Lakshmana Bhatta. This was done to clear the mysteries about Dhvani. The India Office MSS. is written in Bengali characters and he is cited mostly by Oriya, Maithali and Benaras writers. Govinda in his Pradipa pp. 24, 36, 202, 274, Narasimha Thakkura, Kamalakara, Vaidyanatha in his Udbharanacandrika, Nagoji Bhatta in his Uddyota and Visvesvara in his Alamkara Kaustabha pp. 125-186, have cited him. While most of the authors of the Alamkarastra accept him as identical with Candidasa the younger brother of the grandfather of Visvanatha author of the Sāhityadarpana, few of them advanced their arguments in not admitting him so. Foremost among them is S.K. Dey. He appears to have flourished before or about 1300 A.D. He is also cited by Visvanatha, son of Trimaladeva in Kashmiri manuscript dated 1802 A.D. Candidasa has given the name of his grandfather as Srimannarayana in his Kav. Pr. Dipika p. 112. Candidasa mentions a Dhvani Siddhanta-grantha by himself. He also

1 "Srimallaksmana Bhaṭṭānām Suhṛdāmanuśasanaṭu". 
2 I.O.C. 111/141/491. 
3 Sanskrit Poetics, p. 160. 
4 Dipika, p. 13.
quotes a work called Sāhitya-Hṛdaya-Darpana which may be Bhattanayaka's lost Hṛdaya Darpana. Candīdāsa also wrote a commentary on the Drama 'Prabodha Candrodya'. This commentary is placed in the Sarasvatī Bhavan Manuscripts' section at Benaras and seems to be a rare one. Śyāvā Parsad Bhattācārya has tried to show that both these books were written by Candīdāsa. Shri H.P. Śāstri has tried to show that Candīdāsa was Bengali and born in Mukhakula. The family lived at Ketugrama four miles west of Uddhāranapura on the Ganges. Śāstri places him before middle of 15th century.

BHATTĀ GOPĀLA

The commentary of Bhaṭṭa Gopāla is known as Vimarsinī, also this is suggested in the Invocatory stanza of the work. He himself is known as Lauhiṭya Bhaṭṭa Gopāla Sūri amongst the scholars. K. Śambīśivasāstrī asserts that he is identical with Bhaṭṭa Gopāla the father of Sārdātanaya who wrote the Bhavaprakāsa and lived in 14th century A.D. But Dr. S.K. Dey asserts that this Bhaṭṭa Gopāla is identical with the son of Harvānsa Bhaṭṭa Drāvida, who wrote

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1H.P. Śāstri, A.S.B. Mss. VI, p. CCIXVI.
2Invocatory verse last line 'Mahatischeyoge Vimarśettaram.'
3Introduction to Sāhityacudāmani, p. 3.
4Sanskrit Poetics, p. 181 (Part I).
A commentary on Bhānudatta's Rasamañjari. Thus he assigns him to 14th century, but according to Śaṃśiva Saṃstī Bhaṭṭa Gopāla belongs to 12th century. Bhaṭṭa Gopāla has been referred to in a manuscript of Smārtapryāscita, as existing prior to Mādhvācārya who wrote commentaries on three Vedas. This would mean that Bhaṭṭa Gopāla is earlier than Venkatamādhava of 12th century A.D. He also figures in a manuscript of Keralotpatti which is in Trivanderum. Here he is mentioned as a protege of the King Kuḷasekhara. This fact is also supported by two passages available in the present commentary. Thus it is clear that he belonged to 12th century A.D. Many passages in the commentary tell us of his wide travels in the country. The extensive quoting from his own works shows that he wrote many other others. He mentions only Camaṭkāracintāmanī by name.

SRI-VIDYĀCAKRAVARTIN

The author of commentary Sampradāya-prakāśini Śrī Vidyācakra-vartin is also the author of commentary named Saṃjīvinī on the 'Alamkāra Sarvasva'. The calophons of the Sampradāya-Prakāśini and the Saṃjīvinī read the poet's name as Śrī-Vidyācakra-vartin, though many more titles like Saṃskrit Sarvasva, Prākrta-prithviṣvāra, are added to it.

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   Ibid., Part II, p. 414.

The colphon at the end of each canto of the Rukmīṇī Kalyāṇa reads merely his name as Vidyācakravartin without his many titles. The real name of the author cannot be traced. The Sūktiratnabāra of Kalingarāja Sūrya gives verses in the name of Sakla-vidyādhara-cakravartin. Dr. V. Raghvan and Śri Śrikanṭha Śāstri have taken the name Sakala-Vidyācakravartin and Saklavidyadhara as referring to the same person. One of the Ms., of Brhatikā or the Sampradāyaprakāśini in the colphon at the end of its tenth Ullasa reads the author's name as Śri Vidyācakravartin. Vidyācakravartin author of the Sampradāyaprakāśini was the son of Vasudeva who was the court poet of Hoysala king Naraśimha III (1353-91 A.D.). His elder brother Mahādeva was the tutor of Naraśimha III's son Ballala III (1291-1342 A.D.). Our author learnt all the sāstra under his brother. He was treated with greatest regard by the king Ballala III and was very dear to him by virtue of his beautiful creations. The author composed many panegyris on his patron and in territories where Hoysala rule was established.

The question of the date of our author does not present much difficulty. It is possible to fix his chronological position within narrow limit with the available data. It has been pointed out that he flourished in the court of

Ballala III\(^1\) (1291-1342 A.D.). This has also been propounded by Dr. V. Raghvan\(^2\) and S. Śrīkānta Śāstrī. Some people take him to be an elder contemporary of Ballāla III and assign him to about 1300 A.D. but this cannot be accepted for various reasons. Though it is true that Ballāla III had to submit to the Mohammandan forces under Malik Kafr in 1310 A.D. and that Vidyācakravartin states that his patron was in the meridium of his glory but there are references which run contrary to this assertion. Many of his writings show that the Hoyaalas were not at the zenith of their glory in our author's time. Moreover, while describing the many conquests of his patron, our author mentions wars of Kanoi and Kerala which took place between 1299 and 1355 A.D. (K.P. Venkāṭārāman Hoyas in Tamil country p. 20). So it is evident that Vidyācakravartin is later than above mentioned dates.

The earliest author to quote Vidyācakravartin is Mallinātha, in his Tarlā commentary on the Ekāvāli of Vidyādhara. Mallinātha flourished at the end of 14th century and at the beginning of 15th century. So Vidyācakravartin should be assigned to the middle of 14th century. A list

\(^1\)Introduction to the first volume of Kavyaprakāśa, TSS. 78.


\(^3\)A.B.O.R.I. Vol. XVIII, p. 421.
of his writings is being given below:

1. Niskṛṣṭārthkārikās.
2. Rukmanikalyāṇa.
3. Nāṭyāgama.
5. Rasa Mīmāṃsā.
6. Author also seems to have written a commentary on the third kānda of Bhartrihari's Vākyapadīya's Prakīrṇakākānda.
7. A short work on Sivadatta called Dasāślokī.
8. A philosophical work called the Virūpākṣapāṇi-cālīka commentary by Vidyācakravartin has been published, T.S.S. (9) but nothing definite can be said about this.
10. Sampradāya-prakāśīni. Commentary on Kav. Pr.
11. The Prayoga-Dīpīkā a work written on grammar.
12. Many other Kavyas, Dramas, compendia on Vedānta, Yoga, Agama, inscriptions, panegyrics on his patron, which are not available for the present but references are there.

Professor V. Raghvan has shown that Vidyacarkavartin wrote a laghuflīka before writing Brhatīka or Kav. Pr.

GOVINDA THAKKURA

His well known commentary is called 'Pradīpa'.

Govinda also wrote an Udāharanadīpikā apparently the same as

1History of Sanskrit Poetics Part I, p. 188.
'Slokā-Dīpikā' in Stein, cited by Nagōjībhatṭa. This is supplementary to the larger exegetical work being a commentary on the illustrative verses of the text. The 'Pradīpa' has been commented upon by Vaidya Nātha Tatsat (Prabha and Udārārāna Candrīkā) and Nagōjī Bhaṭṭa (Uddyota). Govinda was a native of Mithilā, born in the family of Rāvikara, eldest son of Kesava and Sonadevi, elder brother of poet Śrī Harṣa, who is not however as Peterson¹ supposes, the author of the Naisādha. Because he quotes the writer of Naisādha with the words 'Iti Naisādha Darsanat', on the other hand he quotes his brother's verse with the words 'Madbhṛatuh'.² In addition to this information about himself, Govinda tells us that he learnt Kāvya and Sahitya from his elder brother Rāvikara. His exact date is not known but Govinda refers to Viśvanātha as 'arvācīna', quoting the latter's criticism of Mammaṭa's definition of poetry as well as the latter's own definition of the same, without actually naming him or his Sahitya Darpana.⁴ Govinda, therefore, is probably later than the middle of 14th century. On the other hand he is earlier than the last quarter of the 16th century, being quoted in Prabhākara's Rasa-Pradīpa, which was composed in

¹ Peterson (1), p. 17.
² Pradīpa, p. 513.
³ Ibid., p. 519.
⁴ Ibid., p. 10.
1583 A.D. Nārāyana Thakkura, who flourished later, but not much later, than 1612 A.D. (having himself quoted Kamalākara) is supposed on the authority of the family genealogy to be, fifth in the descent from Govinda. This will roughly place Govinda Thakkura towards the end of the 15th century.

**MAHESVARA**

The present commentator is better known as Mahesvara Bhattacarya Nyāyālakāra. According to Dr. S.K. Dey, he belonged to Bengal and his commentary is popular in the Tolas of Bengal. It bears two names 'Adarśa' and 'Bhāvārtha-cintāmaṇi'. The most commonly used is the former. Mahesvara’s date is uncertain but it cannot be doubted that he is comparatively a recent writer. Vāmanacārya in his introduction to the commentary Bālabodhinī has quoted a letter which narrates that Vaidyanatha Tatsat the writer of the commentary Udāharana-Candrika cites one Mahesa, who is none else but Mahesvara Nyāyālakāra. ‘In the absence of any other proof Mahesvara’s date has to be decided on this very basis. The date of Vaidyanatha is uncertain but his commentary ‘Udāharana-Candrika’ bears the date ‘Viyad-veda-muni-kṣmābhīr mitēde’ meaning thereby 1740 Vikram Samvat or 1683 A.D. But if it is Śaka Samvat then it would be 1818 A.D. He is also said to have composed a commentary on Dayabhāga.

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1. *Introduction to Bālabodhinī, p. 30.*
BHĪMASENA DĪKSITA

His commentary is called Sudhāsāgara or Sudhodadhi. He was a Kānayakubja Brāhmaṇa who describes himself as son of Śivānanda and grandson of Mūrīdhara. His geneology being given thus: Gāṅgādāsa, Viresvara-Muralīdhara-Śivānanda-Bhīmasena. Gāṅgādāsa Dīksita was a performer of great yajñas. His son Viresvara Dīksita was a great devotee of Lord Viṣṇu. His son Mūrīdhara was a great poet and a scholar. He had two sons Trilocana and Śivānanda Dīksita. Śivānanda was the father of our present commentator. As he says he was a great grammarian and a poet. This genealogy shows that scholarship was inherited by Bhīmasena. He was not respected by the scholars in his life time. He wrote this commentary to down the pride of people considering themselves as Paṇḍits. He was a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He had great respect for Māmāṭa. He says that he has written this commentary simply to check the persons, illustrating the original, contrary to its spirit. He is also the author of two independent works called Alamkāra Sāroddhāra and Kuvalayānanda Khaṇḍana, the

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1Peterson, extract (I, p. 94) gives it as Sukhodadhi.

2Ibid.

3Sudhāsāgara, introduction, p. 3.

4This work is also called Alamkāra Sāraṣṭhiti MSS available. Mitra, 4084, Aufrecht - ii, 23a. BORI, Catalogue XII, 158, pp. 179-180.
latter apparently directed against Appaya’s work of the same name, and both referred to in his commentary on Mammaṭa. The last work was composed at Jodhpur while Ajit Singh (1680-1725) was still reigning. Bhīmasena also wrote a commentary on Ratanāvalī. His one more work is quoted by Aufrecht is Udāharanadīpikā. From the dates given by him of his books, it will not be improper, if we place the date of birth of the person some times near 1740. However, any external evidences are not available which may help us in determining his exact date.

NĀGOJī BHATTA

Nāgojī Bhatṭa enjoyed the patronage of king Rāma of Srungiberapura and gave the Sanskrit word a rich harvest of knowledge. In the field of Rhetoric, his Mārmaprakāśa a commentary on Jagannātha’s Rasgangādhara is a work of outstanding merit. In the field of grammar he wrote commentaries directly on the Mahābhāṣya as well as on the Siddhānta-Kaumudi. On the Siddhānta Kaumudi he has written two standard commentaries the Sabdendusekhara called also the Brhacchekhara and Laghu Sabdendusekhara, two independent treatises each supplementing the other.

Total works of Nāgojī Bhatta are more than fifty and the complete list is given in Appendix.

1Aufrecht, ii, p. 19(b), also extract in Stein, pp. 268-269.
Two tales about Nagoji Bhatta are famous. Once when he was sixteen he went to a Sabha of Pandits where he sat on the front seat amongst Pandits he was rebuked and turned out of the place. He there and then pledged to defeat all those who had insulted him and then he went to jungle and penanced for seven days without taking anything. Then he was blessed by the Goddess, then he learned from Hari Diksita and defeated all the Pandits. 'Ji' this title shows that he belonged to Maharashtra.

Though date of his birth is not known it is said that Raja Jaisingh sent him an invitation to attend the Asvamedha at Jaipur. Then Nagoji Bhatta had replied:

"Värañasyām gṛhitaksatra sanyāsaḥsmi ato, Viśvesvarpurūṃ parityaṁyāhyatra gantum na Śaknemi"

In Vikramśaṃvat 1771 Jaisingh performed his Asvamedha. Nagesa Bhatta was in his old age then. In 1723 Vikram Panditarāja Jagannātha went in the court of Shah Jahan to show his scholarship. Nagoji Bhatta has written a commentary on Rasagangadhara. So it can be concluded that he belonged either to the later half of 18th century or 3rd quarter of it. He had no progeny at all and regarded Laghu Sabdendūsekhara as his son and Paraśālaghū-mañjusā as his daughter.

His mother's name is Sati Devi and father's Śiva
SIDDHICANDRA GANÉ

Siddhicandra, the present author is one of those notable Jain writers who have enriched not only the literature of their own faith but have also contributed to Sanskrit literature in general. He belongs to what we might call the last glorious period of Sanskrit literature, the period of Sanskrit Renaissance in the times of the Moghal Emperors Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan. In fact he is a luminary of the age of Panditarāja Jagannātha who was his contemporary at the Moghal court.

Siddhicandra has given ample biographical material in his work 'Bhānucandra Carita'. Virtually in Chapter IV after verse 67 it becomes autobiography of the writer. Siddhicandra in the narration of probably the most important event of his life, gives us a clue to the year of his birth. Jahangira is represented as asking Siddhicandra his age in the following verse:-

"Parabrham prasaktanam vyatītāni Kiyantivah,
Prārabhya janmatoabdāni procuste pancavimsāti"
(Bhānucandra Carita Ch.4 V. 236).

This event of banishment and recall that happened as a result of this discussion that followed are placed by Shri M.D. Desai before the autumn of 1613 A.D. This would give us the year of Siddhicandra's birth as 1588 or 1587 A.D.,

1Uddyota, this is given at the end of all Ullāsās.
If the banishment lasted for a year. Siddhicandra wrote his Jināsatāka-tīkā he himself says in V.S. 1714 (1658 A.D.) and a manuscript of Kāvyapratākāśa-Khandana was copied in the Vikramī Samvat 1722 (1666 A.D.) in his own life time. So he must have lived for at least 77 years. The exact year of his birth however is unknown.

He refers to his physical strength and beauty at several places in the Bhānucandra-Carīta. He is very conscious of his unusual intellectual powers, particularly his capacity of Avdhanas, which earned for him the title of 'Khusfahum' from Akbar. Siddhicandra tells us that Akbar asked him to come daily and live with him in the company of his son. The importance however of this part of narration lies in the information it gives about Siddhicandra's education at the court of Akbar. He describes it in the following manner:

"Kadācit Sāhināhutah, Kadācana punah svatah,  
... ... ...  
... ... ...  
Sāhinā-prerito-athyantam satvaram Pārasīmapi."

The interesting thing to be noted from this is that Akbara asked him to study Pārsī or Persian. There is a further reference to his study of Persian Literature in the description of Akbar's tour in Kashmir in which he and his Gurū accompanied the emperor. He says that he used to study Persian books in the company of the Emperor's grandson.
and recite them in the presence of the Sāhī. We know that 
Jagannātha also had studied Persian.

There is one very important event in Siddhicandra's 
life which goes as under:

"After Akbar, Siddhicandra became a favourite of 
Jahangir also. That jovial and pleasure loving Emperor did 
not like the idea that this young man with a good physique 
should pass an ascetic life of austerity, and so asked him 
to be in the company of five young women and enjoy life."
The episode has been narrated with great embellishment by 
Siddhicandra. Arguments and counter arguments followed in 
which Jahangir tried to persuade the writer to leave ascetic 
life, but he never did so. Later on Siddhicandra again 
became a favourite of Jahangir and got such titles from him 
as, Nadire-Jamān (the unique of the age) and Jahāngir-Pasand 
(favourite of Jahangir).

Works of Siddhicandra =

1. Kādambarī Uttarārthhaṭīkā  
2. Sobhana-stuti ṭīkā  
3. Vṛdhā Prastāvokti-ratnākara  
5. Bhaktāmarasto-travṛtti.  
6. Tarkabhāṣa-ṭīkā.  
7. Sapta-Padarathī-ṭīkā  
9. Vasavadattā Vyṛtti or Vyākhyā-ṭīkā.  
11. Anekarthopasarga-vṛtti.
13. Ṛkhyata-vāda ṭīkā.
15. Sūkti-ratnākāra.
17. Saptā-smaranavṛtti.

To this list one more work noted previously should be added viz. (1) A Brhattika of Kāvyaprakāśa which was composed in the name of his Guru.

VāMANĀCĀRYA

Vāmanācārya has stated in the colophon of his commentary on the tenth Ullāsa of Kav. Pr. that he belonged to dynasty of Bhaṭṭa Śrī Venkaṭeṣa. Bhaṭṭa Venkaṭeṣa is remarked by him as belonging to Gotra of Śālankhayan Mahārṣi. He further informs that the people of his family were the students of Taitṛīya Śākhā and that he himself was the follower of Śrī Purāṇa Prajnācārya's Siddhānta. Brāhmaṇa by caste, he came from a village named 'Jhalaki' in Bijapur District of Mahārāṣṭra. He was the son of a great scholar named Ramacandra Bhaṭṭa. He was student of Bala Śāstrī a renowned scholar of Sanskrit. He does not give other incidents of his life, which may throw any light on his

\[1\] Bālabodhinī, p. 2
person. The date of this commentary is given in Kartika month of the Pratipada of Suklapaksa of the year 1804 Saka Samvat or 1882 A.D. He was a teacher (Head Sastri in Deccan College, Poona) and was appointed to the post by the Englishmen. He was teaching Alamkara and Grammar during his teaching career. It is not known whether he wrote any other work or not.